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# **ASSURANCE SECTION**

## **REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT**

to

**CEDARVILLE UNIVERSITY**  
Cedarville, Ohio

March 19-21, 2007

FOR

**The Higher Learning Commission**  
A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

### **EVALUATION TEAM**

Dr. Jeanette L. Hsieh, Executive Vice President/Provost, Trinity International University,  
Deerfield, IL 60015

Dr. Robert W. Nienhuis, Senior Pastor, Liberty Bible Church, Chesterton, IN 46304

Dr. Carolyn G. Tennant, Professor of English, North Central University, Minneapolis, MN 55404

Dr. Marianne E. Inman, President, Central Methodist University, Fayette, MO 65248 (chair).

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**I. CONTEXT AND NATURE OF VISIT****A. Purpose of Visit**

To conduct a comprehensive evaluation for continuing accreditation at the bachelor's and master's degree levels.

**B. Organizational Context**

Cedarville University is a Christian liberal arts institution of higher learning. It further defines itself as "conservative and evangelical" with no official ties to any specific denomination. Founded as Cedarville College by members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church and chartered in 1887, it became affiliated with the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches in 1953 and currently is associated, but not affiliated with, the Southern Baptist Church. Its name was changed to Cedarville University in 2000 to reflect its broad range of program offerings, including extensive professional programs, and its entrance into the field of graduate education. The University is dedicated to integrating faith and learning, and there is a strong focus on mission, ministry, and service to others. There is a doctrinal statement to which all persons associated with Cedarville University are expected to adhere.

Cedarville University was first granted regional accreditation by the now-named Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools in 1975, and it has been continually accredited since that time. Academic programs are clustered into four schools: Engineering, Nursing, and Science; Health and Human Performance; Humanities, Fine Arts, and Bible; and Social Sciences and Professional Studies. The five largest departments are business administration, education, engineering, social sciences and history, and nursing. Nursing is the single largest major, followed by early childhood education, mechanical engineering, communication arts, and management. Graduate education at the time of the visit was limited to the Master of Education. More than 80% of its 3,100 students are residential. Enrollment has grown almost steadily in recent years, increasing dramatically from its 1,200 students in 1978. First year retention is 83%, and the six-year graduation rate is 69%. The University's physical plant is well designed, attractive, well maintained, and well suited to supporting academics, student life, and a growing enrollment.

**C. Unique Aspects of Visit**

There were none.

**D. Sites or Branch Campuses Visited**

University property is limited to the Cedarville campus, which was the site visited by the team.

**E. Distance Education Reviewed**

None.

**F. Interactions with Constituencies****Governing Board**

6 members of the Board of Trustees

**Executive Management**

- President
- Academic Vice President
- Vice President for Advancement
- Vice President for Business
- Vice President for Christian Ministries
- Vice President for Enrollment Management
- Vice President for Student Life

**Management and Staff**

- Administrative Council
- Associate Vice President, Academic Administration
- Associate Vice President, Business and Facilities
- Director, Academic Assistance Center
- Director of Admission
  - Admission Counselors (9)
- Associate Director of Athletics
  - Athletic Coaches (5)
- Director, Center for Bioethics
- Directors of Christian Ministries (4)
- Director of Financial Aid
- Director, Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning
- Dean of Library Services
- Dean of Student Life
  - Associate Deans of Student Life (2)
  - Student Life Program Staff (3)
- Chief Information Officer
- Coordinator of Travel Studies Programs
- Administrative Assistant, Continuing Education
- Registrar
- SALT (Strategic Assistance Leadership Team) representatives (10 persons)
- Self-study coordinator
- Open meeting with staff (approximately 100 in attendance)

**Faculty**

- Dean of the School of Health and Human Performance
- Department chairs (2), School of Health and Human Performance
- Interim Dean of the School of Humanities, Fine Arts, and Bible
- Dean of the School of Social Sciences and Professional Studies
- Dean of the School of Engineering, Nursing, and Science
- Dean of Library Services
- Deans Council
- Interim Chair, Biblical Studies Department
- Chair, Communications Department
- Chair, Education Department and Director of Master of Education Program
- Chair, Engineering and Computer Science Department

Chair, Language and Literature Department  
Chair, Music Department  
Chair, Nursing Department  
Chair, Psychology Department  
Chair, Science and Mathematics Department  
Director, Center for Political Studies  
Director, Center for Teaching and Learning  
Director of the Honors Program  
Director, International Studies major  
Faculty member, Center for Bioethics  
Faculty, School of Health and Human Performance (9)  
Group of selected senior faculty (12 persons)  
Assessment Committee (11 members)  
General Education Assessment Committee (7 members)  
Chairs Committee (13 chairs)  
Diversity Statement Committee (6 members)  
Faculty Academic Advisory Committee (14 members)  
Faculty Committee to the President (7 members)  
Open meeting with faculty (approximately 100 in attendance)

**Students**

Open meeting with student leaders (40 in attendance)  
Meeting with students engaged in Christian ministries (11 in attendance)  
Student athletes (14 in attendance)  
Students in Residence Life and Student Programs (13)  
Students in the School of Health and Human Performance (20)

**Other**

Open meeting with alumni and community members (30 in attendance)

**G. Principal Documents, Materials, and Web Pages Reviewed**

**Cedarville University Self-Study Documents**

Self-Study, including Appendices  
University Catalogs  
    Undergraduate  
    Graduate  
Faculty Handbook  
Staff Handbook  
Student Handbook  
Audited Financial Reports, 2004, 2005 and 2006  
Institutional Snapshot

**Cedarville University Administrative Documents**

Board of Trustees minutes  
Minutes of faculty committees  
Annual Report 2005  
Governance chart

- Organizational charts
- Student complaint log
- Schedule of Classes Fall 2006
- Schedule of Classes Spring 2007
- Diversity Policy for Faculty and Staff
- Diversity Policy for Students
- Sampling of Faculty Personnel Files

#### **Cedarville University Internal Assessment Documents**

- Enrollment Management
  - Canceled Student Survey and Results 2002, 2003, 2004
  - New Student Survey and Results 2002, 2003, 2004)
- General assessment Parts I, II, and III (includes alumni survey, spiritual well-being survey scores, general education CAAP scores and IDEA integration scores)
- Alumni survey response report 2005
- Surveys including alumni survey of events, chapel surveys, Christian Ministries survey, Heartsong evaluation, evaluation of career services, student life academic surveys including social work, LibQUAL, advising study, at-risk report, coaches' evaluations
- Assessment of Bible minor (required of all students), spring 2005
- CAAP Report 2006: Major program assessment, including national exam pass rates for some majors and some other major-specific assessment
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), 2004

#### **Cedarville University Accreditation Documents**

- Report of 1997 NCA review team
- HLC acceptance of 2002 progress report on Master of Science in Administration degree
- HLC approval in 2002 to offer the Master of Education degree program

#### **Cedarville University Website**

- General University information
- Virtual resource room

#### **Self-Study Resource Documents**

- Admissions Current Promotional Materials
- "The Cedarville Experience" publication
- Study Abroad documents
- Multicultural Freshman Learning Community documents
- Academic Assistance Center documents
- 2006-2008 Strategic Plan
- Academic Plan
- Academic Strategy 2006 (provided by Dean of School of Engineering, Nursing, Sciences [ENS])
- School of ENS Accomplishments (2006-2007)
- School of ENS Mission Statement
- School of ENS Mission and Objectives
- Center for Political Studies publicity



- Selected faculty paper presentations
- Faculty summer grant program
- Recent examples of faculty leave
- Faculty scholarship activities since 2004
- Faculty teaching schedule, 2006-2007
- Sampling of syllabi
- Faculty salary comparisons 1991-92, 1996-97, 2004-05
- Individual survey data—Criterion Three
- Minority recruitment update, fall 2006
- Minority recruitment enrollment report, 2001-2005
- Planning documents from years prior to 2006
- Strategic planning guidelines 2006-2010
- Planning: Facilities and Maintenance
  - Biblical Studies Center Building Program
  - Biblical Studies Center and Academic Facility Proposal
  - Capital Projects Process Flow Description
  - Explanation of Facilities Master Plan and Maintenance Plans
  - Facility Management Summary Report 2004
  - Residence Hall Renovation Proposal
- General information—institutional profile
- General information—annual reports
- University budgets
- Financial: Costs and Aids
  - CCCU Admission Budget Survey
  - CCCU Cost to Recruit Survey
  - Cedarville University Discount Rate 2004, 2005
  - Financial Aid History 1996-2006
  - Financial Aid Policies and Procedures
- Policies and Procedures: Christian Ministries
  - Community Ministries Descriptions, Policies and Forms
  - Community Ministries Team Leaders Manual, 2004-2005
  - Discipleship Ministries Descriptions, Policies and Forms
  - HeartSong Description, Policies and Forms
  - HeartSong Team Manual, 2004 and 2005
  - Lifeline Players Description, Policies and Forms
  - Master's Puppets Description, Policies and Forms
  - Missions Involvement Services Description, Policies and Forms
- Reports of gifts and endowment
- Costs and financial aid
- Federal compliance—financial, general
- Federal compliance—disability
- Governance documents, including copy of 1887 charter
- Governance—mission revision
- Strategic planning—Parts 1, 2, and 3
- Notes from Ad Hoc Trustee Planning Group—2004
- Planning—Divisions
- Christianity Today* Best Christian Workplaces Institute Survey Results (2003-2005)
- Christianity Today* Best Christian Workplaces Institute Employee Survey Benchmark

## Report (2007)

Community interactions—Heads of organizations

*Cedars* (student newspaper)

Community interactions—Constituents, Feedback

Community interactions—promotions-admissions

Community interactions—promotions-alumni relations

Community interactions—promotions-marketing

Community interactions—statistics

## II. COMMITMENT TO PEER REVIEW

### A. Comprehensiveness of the Self-Study Process

The self-study process began in the spring of 2004 with the appointment of a faculty member as self-study coordinator. The self-study steering committee was named by fall 2004, and it consisted of the chairs of each criterion-specific subcommittee, the director of institutional research and effectiveness, the director of the graduate school, and three members at-large. Meetings of the committee commenced in September 2004. All persons with whom the team visited were conversant with the content of the self-study and had been involved in some way in the preparation of the document. The team concluded that the self-study process was effective in engaging a large cross-section of the Cedarville University community.

### B. Integrity of the Self-Study Report

The self-study was very well organized and addressed each criterion in great detail, citing the source of the evidence presented for each core component. Most significantly, it presented a candid assessment of the institution's strengths and opportunities. The book of appendices, along with the virtual resource room, facilitated the team's preparation for the visit.

### C. Adequacy of Progress in Addressing Previously Identified Challenges

Previously identified challenges were the lack of significant endowment funds and the need for improving the professional and personal counseling resources on campus. The team considers the response of Cedarville University to these challenges to be adequate, in particular the augmentation of counseling services. Although the institution recognizes that its approximately \$15 million endowment is still limited in its capacity to serve as a cushion for unexpected developments or to provide the amount of student financial assistance that is desirable, the endowment did grow almost six-fold from 1994 to 2006. Increasing the endowment is a continuing priority for the institution.

### D. Notification of Evaluation Visit and Solicitation of Third-Party Comment

Requirements were fulfilled. Notification was placed in numerous Cedarville University publications as well as more public communications. No third party comments were received.

### III. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

The team reviewed the required Title IV compliance areas and the student complaint information.

### IV. FULFILLMENT OF THE CRITERIA

**CRITERION ONE: MISSION AND INTEGRITY.** The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

#### 1. Evidence that Core Components are met

- a. The current mission statement was adopted in 2005. All constituents with whom the team visited indicated their understanding of and support for the mission. The mission statement clearly articulates the integration of biblical truth into the educational experience.
- b. The mission of Cedarville University was highly visible in all publications, both print and electronic, reviewed by the team. The team noted frequent references to the mission of the institution in conversations with all constituencies. All expressed commitment to the mission and cited the mission as a primary factor in having attracted them to Cedarville.
- c. Cedarville University has developed a formal diversity policy that is considered one of the institution's core documents. This policy is based upon a Christian worldview that acknowledges the principle of human equality. From 2001 to 2006 the proportion of ethnic minority students enrolled at Cedarville has doubled, from 3% (88 persons) to 6% (188 persons). In addition, the University recently approved a diversity statement—different from the policy—which is a direct outgrowth of the mission statement.
- d. The global awareness requirement in the curriculum offers study abroad experiences as well as other opportunities to expand students' perspectives. Speakers representing diverse social and political perspectives, along with exchanges with a Korean university and nearby colleges, also enrich the students' Cedarville experience.
- e. The team found evidence of programs and services that actualize the mission of the University. The Division of Christian Ministries, along with numerous service opportunities, provides students, faculty, and staff with rich personal growth and outreach opportunities.
- f. The doctrinal statement which each member of the Cedarville University community is expected to sign annually highlights the mission and purposes of the institution for all constituencies.

- g. Cedarville University's organizational structures are clearly defined. The Board of Trustees is very active in institutional planning and programming and is committed to the continued long-term, mission-driven wellbeing of the institution.

**2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention.**

- a. In light of the significant growth of Cedarville University, the changes in the composition of the administrative council (senior administrative staff), and the fact that 40% of the faculty have joined the University since 2001, the team found differing perspectives among persons interviewed as to the level of involvement sought by the administration in institutional decision making. Some were appreciative of their input into planning and budgeting processes, while others indicated that they felt their ideas had been forwarded through administrative channels but they were unaware that any action had been taken on them. As Cedarville University continues to grow and change, the team recommends institutional attention to the critical importance of communication, process, and feedback to constituents.

**3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.**

None noted.

**4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)**

None noted.

**Recommendation of the Team**

Pattern of evidence sufficiently demonstrated; no Commission follow-up recommended.

**CRITERION TWO: PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE.** The organization's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

**1. Evidence that Core Components are met**

- a. Cedarville University is in a position to respond to the future because of its technological infrastructure, its excellent facilities, the growth in its student body and majors, its clear commitment to the integration of faith and learning, its concern with staying current, and its strategic planning processes. Cedarville is also involved in environmental scanning and discussion of the changing world, thus enabling the institution to take advantage of strategic opportunities.
- b. The strategic planning process at Cedarville University was changed in recent years as the new President arrived in 2003. The goal of the current process is to be more evaluative, pervasive, and useful than had been the case in the past. Currently it includes all divisions through the use of SALT (Strategic Advance-

ment Leadership Teams) overseen by each vice president. The SALT teams reflect their constituencies, are engaged in preparing a plan, and then they interact with other teams to reach consensus. These plans are then passed on to the Administrative Council and ultimately to the Board of Trustees for decision making and, ideally, budgeting. The final strategic plan is available on Cedarville's website for all to see.

- c. In the past two years much evaluation and some assessment of student learning have been implemented and/or formalized through the position of a Director of Assessment. This change represents a good start; however, more assessment of student learning needs to be accomplished. The evaluation data available from various surveys that have been administered are useful for program change and development.
- d. Decisions in strategic planning are generally aligned to the institution's mission. It will be important to continue this practice as Cedarville determines its appropriate future in graduate education.
- e. Cedarville University operates in a fiscally responsible manner, reporting annually a balanced budget with surpluses ranging from 2 to 7 percent (\$1 to 4 million on an approximately \$60 million budget). These surpluses are placed in a capital reserves fund, which ultimately contribute to the funding for new construction projects.
- f. Since 1996, the university has added three new major facilities: the Dixon Ministry Center, the Stevens Student Center, and the Fitness/Recreation/Health Center. All of these major facilities have been built without the institution incurring debt. Space vacated by moves due to new construction has been renovated and paid for by donations and/or capital reserves monies, again avoiding institutional debt.
- g. Secondary costs for new buildings (i.e., utilities, cleaning, maintenance, and the like) are phased into the institutional budget over two years, beginning the year that construction commences, to make sure that the costs are properly budgeted and to avoid a severe budget adjustment at any point.
- h. Since 1996, two new dormitories have been constructed to accommodate the institution's growing student enrollment. In 2006, the first of six planned residence hall renovations was completed. Additional residence hall renovations are planned, one per year, with funding to come from the capital reserve fund of the university. Residence hall renovation is the only capital work at Cedarville that is not fully funded at the outset, and that is accomplished through bond funding since there is a direct student revenue stream to service the debt.

- i. A new academic building, the Biblical Studies Center, is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2008. Funding for this new facility at the time of the visit was at nearly 75% of the total expected to be raised, with additional monies designated in the capital reserve fund to complete the project.
- j. Nearly all classrooms are equipped with instructional technology platforms that permit faculty members to use numerous types of instructional media and software applications.
- k. Student access to technology is extensive, with one desktop computer in every residence hall room, providing the students with 24-hour access to the campus network. All faculty members and staff persons have desktop computers at their work site.
- l. The university operates on a three-year technology cycle which allows for the replacement of one-third of the institution's computers every year.
- m. The technology office is well staffed, with personnel to assist with instructional support as well as general technology support and repair. The Director of Technology reports to the Academic Vice President and is a member of the Deans Council, providing an excellent link between academic programs and technology support.
- n. The Enrollment Management division is led by a highly qualified and experienced vice president who is a member of the President's Cabinet and reports directly to the President. The Admission Office is staffed with experienced professionals, many of whom are Cedarville graduates. The admissions recruiters are pleasant and articulate representatives of the university who know both the institution and the constituency and how to bring the two together appropriately. A strong service orientation permeates the Admission Office.
- o. The materials produced by the Admissions Office are attractive and appealing, designed to both catch the eye of the prospective student and engage him or her with the various opportunities available at the university.
- p. Cedarville University regularly raises between \$6 and 7 million per year, just under \$1 million of which is contributed to the Cedarville Fund, which in turn represents a revenue line in the institution's annual budget.
- q. Offices at the University appeared to the team to be adequately staffed, although some academic departments indicated a desire for additional faculty. Records in the registrar's office were secure and kept in excellent order.

- r. Faculty size has grown from 169 in 1999 to 211 in 2006, and the student:faculty ratio at the time of the visit was 13.8:1.
- s. Faculty salaries are competitive, and at all ranks the average is above the average of benchmarked groups.

**2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention.**

- a. The University's endowment of \$15 million is low for an institution of its size. Not only does it provide very little "cushioning" in the event of a serious downturn in enrollment (Cedarville's budget is 92% enrollment-driven), but it provides very limited resources for student financial assistance. Although Cedarville's enrollment has almost steadily increased, in the year of the team's visit the institution experienced a decrease of approximately 100 students, which was largely attributed to Cedarville's having offered much lower scholarship awards than many of their competitors had. The institution's plan to increase scholarship support and to increase the endowment in order to fund this support is important to the fulfillment of Cedarville's goal of continued enrollment growth. Although there was mention to the team of students needing to borrow some \$18,000 per year to attend Cedarville, the average indebtedness of Cedarville graduates is \$17,000, comparable to the average at many institutions that award greater amounts of financial aid than Cedarville does.
- b. The institution's plan to develop additional revenue streams is commendable. Particular attention is focused on online learning opportunities, continuing education and extended studies, and additional undergraduate and graduate programs as feasible and appropriate.
- c. The alumni giving rate of approximately 10% is lower than desirable. Although there are multiple ways of measuring alumni giving (graduates versus attendees, percent of those asked versus the total alumni base), a focus on gaining additional donors would serve Cedarville well.

**3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.**

None noted.

**4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)**

None noted.

**Recommendation of the Team**

Pattern of evidence sufficiently demonstrated; no Commission follow-up recommended.

**CRITERION THREE: STUDENT LEARNING AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING.** The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that

demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

**1. Evidence that Core Components are met**

- a. Although each academic department has developed five objectives intended to be student learning outcomes, some are worded from the instructor's viewpoint, thus making student learning assessment difficult in some cases.
- b. Evaluation surveys and the student learning assessment that does exist indicate that, generally speaking, Cedarville rates above the norms in its major test results and survey indicators.
- c. The Cedarville University library is an inviting facility which has kept up with the digital/cooperative information age by joining OhioLINK, an Ohio consortium of 84 academic libraries. Students have access to 190 databases, 6200 full-text journals online (plus 1,000 in print in the library itself), an on-site collection of 200,000 books, and 75 computers. Involved in providing services and training are 25 full-time librarians in addition to a student assistant staff of 40, all resulting in strong student ratings for the library.
- d. Since the Academic Assistance Center was restructured two years ago, the Center has seen great advances in the services and numbers of students served, including students with disabilities, test proctoring, and tutoring. The Academic Assistance Center is currently staffed with three full-time and 60 part-time personnel. This Center will have enlarged space in the new Center for Biblical Studies building, construction of which had just begun at the time of the team's visit. In addition, there is a relatively new Writing Center on campus with a full-time director.
- e. All documents reviewed confirm that Cedarville's faculty have completed advanced degrees in appropriate disciplines, with almost two-thirds of the faculty holding terminal degrees.
- f. Discussions with faculty and a review of key documents verify that the integration of faith, learning, and living is a clear focus and distinctive of Cedarville University. Students and faculty alike are encouraged to think and live integratively. From the liberal arts core through the capstone course, a focus of the student experience is to think in ways that tie biblical truth to life.
- g. Nearly every classroom has a 'technology desk' from which the faculty member is able to use a variety of multi-media and software applications to enhance the learning experience. There is a sizable technology support staff, including a newly appointed course designer, available to assist faculty members in the use of technology in the classroom. WebCT has been chosen as the software platform for faculty members to use to support their work in the classroom. A faculty member has been given a part-time assignment to assist other faculty members in the utilization of WebCT. Additional computer labs exist across the campus, some dedicated to specific



uses (i.e., graphic design or business), where students can access on-line resources to expand the learning resources.

- h. Every residence hall room contains a desktop computer and an additional technology jack with which a student may connect his or her personal computer to the university system (CedarNet).
- i. The university has recently begun a new Center for Teaching and Learning which serves as a resource to faculty members who desire to improve their abilities as classroom educators.

**2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention**

- a. The faculty is not involved in any systemic evaluation process once they are tenured, with the exception of student evaluations of one class of the instructor's choosing per semester. Requirements for promotion are not clear and, according to faculty reports, may not always be equitably applied. In addition, neither portfolios nor overall assessment of teaching effectiveness are utilized. In order to develop a culture of graduate education which the University Indicates it desires, it should focus upon the continued development of the faculty's scholarship and growth in a more systematic way.

**3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.**

- a. Because of the current structure in which the Director of Assessment reports directly to the President, the Deans of the Schools and the Academic Vice President are not always aware of assessment findings, thereby not closing the feedback loop and limiting the types of program and curricular changes that should be a result of effective assessment. Across campus there is a general lack of delineation between evaluation and the assessment of student learning. The preponderance of data is from instruments such as surveys, which measure program effectiveness rather the assessment of student learning. Some of the five objectives from each department are not written in student learning terms, but rather they focus on what the instructor will do, thus making assessment difficult. Some majors have considered assessing each of these objectives, but not all have done so. The general education program has accomplished some recent assessment, but at the time of the visit it was still grappling with what general education should consist of, an issue which was scheduled for discussion over the next academic year, thus allowing assessment to grow with the faculty's increased understanding.

**4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)**

None noted.

**Recommendation of the Team**

Pattern of evidence demonstrated; progress report on assessment due by May 1, 2010.

**CRITERION FOUR: ACQUISITION, DISCOVERY, AND APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE.**

The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

**1. Evidence that Core Components are met**

- a. Some exemplary scholarship occurs as some faculty members are writing books, presenting papers at conferences, and engaging in other scholarly activities. For example, a business professor has developed the *Biblical Integration of Business Journal*, which has reportedly been well accepted in the profession. More could be done in this arena overall as the University considers expanding its graduate program offerings.
- b. The University provides resources to faculty to attend conferences, to undertake summer research, to reduce teaching loads for scholarly or other purposes, and to recognize faculty for their involvement in scholarly activities.
- c. The commitment to integrating faith with intellectual inquiry is emphasized in new faculty appointments, orientation, professional development, and recognition through awards, promotion, and tenure.
- d. Students are involved in a variety of ways in research with faculty and in presenting papers and other scholarly activities. The debate and forensics teams perform very well (taking first or second place in various tournaments), as do students in the Solar Boat Challenge (first place nationally and second internationally) and in the Computer Robot Competition (second place nationally).
- e. Students have some access to global learning experiences through some travel study abroad programs, generally organized through the CCCU, CIEE, Brethren Colleges Abroad, and Central College Abroad, although several Cedarville-planned programs also exist on a minor basis. Cedarville University students would benefit from additional opportunities to study and serve in international settings.
- f. Career Center statistics indicate that approximately 10% of Cedarville's graduates go on to graduate or professional school within one year of their graduation. Graduates of professional programs tend to choose employment in their field as opposed to immediate further study.

**2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention**

- a. In light of Cedarville's location away from metropolitan centers and its relatively homogeneous faculty and student body, global awareness as a student outcome for the general education core is laudable. However, students may fulfill the requirements for global awareness through pre-collegiate experiences/courses or by double counting courses used to fulfill the humanities or social science electives in the core. Accordingly, the way in which Cedarville students elect to fulfill the global awareness proficiency requirement is quite uneven, and as a result this learning outcome may or may not be achieved. The general education core needs to be reviewed to assure that it meets all the stated objectives.
- b. At most one-fourth of Cedarville's students at any given time participate in international study or mission trips abroad. Because of the vital importance of an informed global perspective for educated citizens in today's world, an expansion of international opportunities would serve Cedarville's students—and the broader society—well.
- c. The team heard from several constituent groups a desire for additional instruction in world languages. A major in Spanish is available, along with a course each in Arabic and French and several courses in German. Chinese has been offered through continuing education. Accordingly, the team recommends that Cedarville University consider carefully its language offerings so that students are appropriately prepared for global study and service experiences.
- d. The Centers for Political Studies and Bioethics were created in order to encourage critical and integrative thinking skills and to provide a distinctively Biblical perspective to conversations regarding current societal issues. These centers were designed to extend the mission of Cedarville University to academia and society at large. Their effectiveness, however, has been hindered by minimal financial support and little to no released time for faculty to develop and promote these centers. If these centers of learning are to have a significant impact on the scholarly ethos on campus and begin to engage the wider culture in significant conversations, the institution must place greater emphasis on their development. Fundraising options to support the work of these centers should be considered.
- e. Goals for the Cedarville experience confirm a commitment to academic excellence as well as a desire for students to learn to think critically and to communicate effectively. Whereas first year students report on the NSSE that they are challenged intellectually, seniors reported in 2004 that they are not challenged to do their best work. Developing appropriately demanding educational experiences for upper division students will support a scholarly ethos on Cedarville University's campus. Academic divisions would do well to explore the level of academic challenge necessary to encourage intellectual inquiry for Cedarville students.

**3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.**

None noted.

**4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)**

None noted.

**Recommendation of the Team**

Pattern of evidence sufficiently demonstrated; no Commission follow-up needed.

**CRITERION FIVE: ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE.** As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

**1. Evidence that Core Components are met**

- a. Cedarville offers a relatively limited set of continuing education opportunities and is committed to increasing these offerings and thus expanding the institution's constituent base. Courses that have been taught have responded to direct indications of need and interest from both the internal and external communities.
- b. Alumni and community members alike expressed great appreciation for the mission of the institution and for the quality of students and graduates. Student volunteers in community organizations were hailed, and the University's standard of excellence was affirmed.
- c. There are 17 full-time staff members in the Division of Christian Ministries, headed by a caring and ministry-focused vice president, who are dedicated to service on and off campus, including international service. A few ministry teams are 'audition only' teams, but the vast majority of ministry and service teams are open to all students who desire to be involved. The offices of the Division are strategically located in a highly visible area of the Dixon Ministry Center.
- d. In any given semester 750 to 1,000 students (approximately 25 to 33% of the student body) are involved in some form of community ministry or discipleship groups. These activities were cited by all members of the broader Cedarville University community as among the distinctions of the University and among the institution's most significant attributes.
- e. Students involved in service activities through the Division of Christian Ministries have a clear understanding of the university, its mission and their role as representatives of the school. They are bright, articulate and passionate about both their ministry and their school.

- f. Institutional support for service is strong, from the Board of Trustees on down, and can be readily seen in the significant budget allocation made to support this division and its work.
  - g. The athletic administration, coaches and student athletes all know and embrace the university mission and are committed to seeing athletics through that lens.
  - h. The newly constructed Fitness/Recreation/Health Center, in addition to providing much needed facilities for the university constituency, has also been made available to community residents with great success and appreciation.
  - i. Community support for the athletics program is considerable and can be seen in attendance at athletics events as well as 'booster support' for specific athletic programs and efforts.
  - j. The university is an active member of both the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (Division II) and the National Christian College Athletic Association.
  - k. Because athletic scholarships are minimal, student athletes are quick to point out that the decision to attend Cedarville University was not driven by finances but by a desire for the kind of educational environment that Cedarville offers.
2. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention**
- a. Because an increase in outreach programming represents a change in culture for Cedarville, which has traditionally focused on the campus experience, the institution will be well served in helping the Cedarville community understand the importance of expanding its service area.
3. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.**  
None noted.
4. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)**  
None noted.

**Recommendation of the Team**

Pattern of evidence sufficiently demonstrated; no Commission follow-up needed.

**V. STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS****A. Affiliation Status**

NO CHANGE.

**B. Nature of Organization****1. Legal status.**

No change.

**2. Degrees awarded.**

No change.

**C. Conditions of Affiliation****1. Stipulation on affiliation status**

No change.

**2. Approval of degree sites**

No change.

**3. Approval of distance education degree**

No change.

**4. Reports required****Progress Report**

Assessment—May 1, 2010.

**Rationale and Expectations**

Cedarville University had not, at the time of the visit, fully developed a culture of assessment. A considerable volume of evaluative data had been collected, and often Cedarville compared favorably in benchmarking itself against comparable institutions. Still, the feedback loop had not been closed as expected, with corresponding improvements in courses, programs, and student learning.

Across campus the team found a general lack of delineation between evaluation and the assessment of student learning. The preponderance of data was from instruments such as surveys, which measure program effectiveness rather than the assessment of student learning. Some of the five prescribed objectives from each department are not written in student learning terms, but rather they focus on what the instructor will do, thus making assessment difficult. Some majors have considered assessing each of these objectives, but not all had done so at the time of the visit. The general education program has accomplished some recent assessment, but at the time of the visit it was still grappling with what

general education should consist of, an issue which was scheduled for discussion over the next academic year, thus allowing assessment to grow with the faculty's increased understanding.

Accordingly, Cedarville University will submit a progress report on assessment by May 1, 2010. This report will address (1) the manner in which each major, the general education courses, and the graduate program have addressed the ways that they will measure their defined learning outcomes; and (2) the structural changes or processes that have been instituted to assure the timely dissemination of assessment data to the academic personnel responsible for curricular and program decision making.

**5. Other visits scheduled**

None.

**6. Organization change request**

Not applicable.

**D. Commission Sanction or Adverse Action**

None.

**E. Summary of Commission Review**

**Next comprehensive visit:** 2016-2017.

**Rationale for recommendation:**

From careful reading of the self study, review of relevant print and electronic documents and other materials, and meetings with representatives of each of Cedarville University's constituent groups, the team concludes that Cedarville University meets the five criteria for accreditation.

Cedarville University has grown substantially since its last comprehensive visit in 1997, and it has satisfactorily addressed the two concerns identified in the report of that visit. At the time of the current visit, the University was still becoming accustomed to the leadership style on the part of the new President following the 25-year tenure of his predecessor, to changes in the composition of the senior staff members on the administrative council, and to the significant numbers of new faculty members (40% of the faculty, largely in order to accommodate the increase in enrollment) in recent years. The team observed a culture of participation and a commitment to constituent involvement in planning and decision making. At the same time, the team noted that some members of the Cedarville community found the more prescriptive approach of the past from the senior leadership a more comfortable environment in which to operate. In the team's judgment, at the time of the visit the articulation of a clear vision for and from the Cedarville community yet needed to be developed. Never in question, however, was the understanding of and commitment to all constituent groups to the mission, values, and purposes of Cedarville. All persons with whom the team visited indicated great appreciation for the integration of faith and learning that is a hallmark of the University, and all persons expressed pride in the service and ministries exhibited

by members of the Cedarville community. Everyone with whom team members spoke appeared convinced of the importance of dedicated persons making a positive difference in the world, and they were equally convinced that a Cedarville education and participating in the Cedarville community make that difference.

The physical plant and resources of Cedarville University could easily be a model for any institution of higher learning. A major focus of the institution for several decades has been on new buildings and on maintaining existing structures, and all new construction has been debt-free. The only debt incurred, in fact, is bond financing for residence hall renovations since there is a clear income stream against the debt. Cedarville operates with a balanced budget and generally reports an annual net of at least \$1 million (generally more) which is placed into a capital reserve fund. As resources accumulate in this fund, they are often transferred to the account supporting new construction.

Cedarville's endowment, at \$15 million, is low for an institution of its size. Most persons with whom the team visited lamented the limited funding available for student financial assistance, and endowment growth with a corresponding increase in scholarship support is a priority for the institution. At the same time, enrollment has almost steadily increased even with the limited aid available. The 3,100 enrollment at the time of the visit was lower than the previous year—a concern for the institution—yet staff members reported record applications for the next academic year, a result that was attributed to some changes in admission staff and leadership.

Assessment of student learning has not yet reached a mature level at Cedarville University, even though the team found that many evaluation measures had been put into place. By and large, the surveys and other instruments used indicate positive attitudes by Cedarville students, but the feedback loop to improve student learning had not yet become institutionalized. Accordingly, the team is recommending that a progress report on assessment be submitted by May 1, 2010.

The team found the Cedarville experience for students a positive one, with a full range of academic and student development programs and services in place and, for the most part, fully staffed and supported. The students with whom the team visited indicated a clear sense of direction for their lives, along with an appreciation of the role that Cedarville University was playing in that personal mission.

Thanks to broadly based planning processes and the commitment of all constituents of Cedarville University, the institution appears poised for many years of continued growth and service.